

REMARKS

The outstanding Restriction Requirement indicates that claims 1-85 remain pending. However, several claims in the instant application have been canceled by Applicant under Article 34 of the PCT. Specifically, claims 9-21, 26-37, 42-45, 59-70, and 76-83 have been canceled. This includes all the claims allegedly reading on Species II.

Therefore, Applicant will address the Restriction Requirement under the assumption that pending claims 1-8, 22-25, 38-41, 46-58, 71-75, and 84-85 are present in the above-captioned application and are subject to species election under 35 U.S.C. §121. The following allegedly distinct species of the claimed invention are present in the claims:

SPECIES I – Claims 1-8, 50-58, 71-75, and 84-85 corresponding to FIGS. 1-8 and 15-17.

SPECIES II – All claims are canceled.

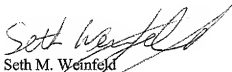
SPECIES III – Claims 22-25, 38-41, and 46-49, corresponding to FIGS. 12-14 and 18-22.

It is the Examiner's position that the species listed as Species I-III are patentably distinct from each other. The Examiner notes that claims 1, 4, 55, 58, 74 and 75 are generic claims. The Examiner requires an election of a single Species (from among Species I-III).

In response to the Examiner's requirement for species election, Applicant elects to prosecute the subject matter of Species I. However, Applicant reserves the right under 35 U.S.C. §121 to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non-elected subject matter in this application.

In view of the foregoing, an examination on the merits of the elected claims, at an early date, is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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